


The Great Ocean Road



VICTORIA / AUSTRALIA



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Queenscliff ~ Point Lonsdale

Queenscliff became a popular seaside resort in the late 1800s and many gracious Victorian buildings, such as the Royal Hotel, remain. It is still a fascinating holiday destination with galleries, antiques and craft shops. Fort Queenscliff dates from the 1880s when a Russian invasion was feared. Powerful guns were installed to guard the narrow entrance to Port Phillip Bay. This treacherous stretch of water, known as the Rip, is the entrance to Australia's busiest port. Point Lonsdale is a quiet town with a safe swimming beach. The lighthouse was built in 1902. There is a regular ferry service between Queenscliff and Sorrento.



▲ Evening light at "the Cut" Queenscliff

Point Lonsdale Lighthouse, built 1902 ►







◀ An aerial view over Queenscliff



▲ Fort Queenscliff



▲ The Royal Hotel

▲ Couto boat sailing

Ocean Grove ~ Barwon Heads

From Point Lonsdale to Ocean Grove stretches one of the safest swimming and surfing beaches in Victoria. The town of Ocean Grove is on the Barwon River and on the edge of a nature reserve. The largest town on the Bellarine Peninsula, it has a thriving shopping centre and its golf course has superb coastal views. Across the river is Barwon Heads. The two towns are joined by Victoria's longest timber road bridge, constructed in 1927. The popular Australian TV series *SeaChange* was filmed at Barwon Heads and visitors come to enjoy the charming locations featured in the series. Both towns have restaurants overlooking the sea — fine dining with a view.



Surf carnival at Ocean Grove ►





Torquay

Torquay became a popular surfing beach in the 1950s and is now the recognised surf centre of Australia. Since 1962 Bells Beach has been home to an international surfing contest, the longest running surfing competition in the world. Torquay boasts many specialist surfing shops and a surfing museum. Just twenty minutes from Geelong, Torquay marks the start of the Great Ocean Road, which was built by returned soldiers as a memorial to those who died in World War I. It was officially opened in 1932 and tolls were collected where the Memorial Arch now stands at Eastern View.



▲ An aerial view over Torquay

Surfing Winky Pop near Bells Beach (Photo Steve Ryan) ►

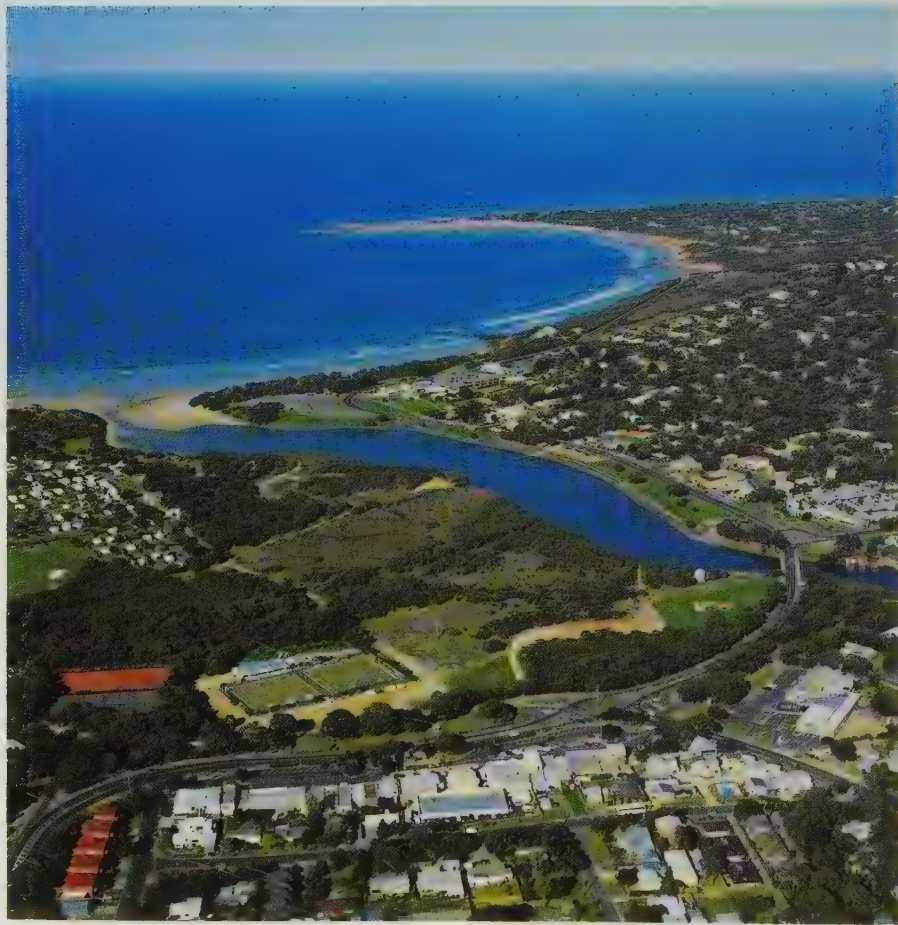


Anglesea ~ Aireys Inlet

Anglesea has a superb beach hidden from the road by sand dunes. The town's golf course is well-known for its resident kangaroos. Aireys Inlet was once a staging post for Cobb & Co coaches. Since the devastating Ash Wednesday fires of 1983, many eye-catching architect-designed homes have been built in the vicinity. A prominent landmark is the Split Point Lighthouse, built in 1891. It is 34 metres high and 66 metres above sea level and overlooks Eagle and Table rocks. The Surf Coast Walk has fine views of the rugged coast line.



▲ The locals are friendly at Anglesea Golf Club



▲ An aerial view over Anglesea



▲ An aerial view over the coast at Aireys Inlet



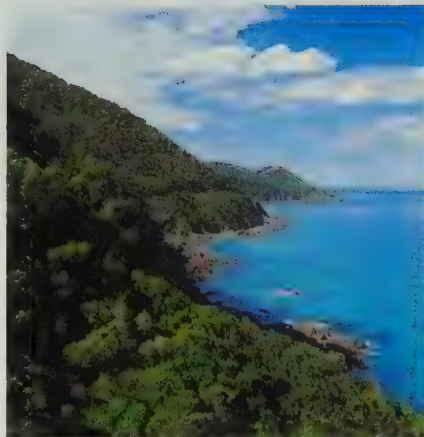
▲ Split Point Lighthouse, built 1891

Lorne

Lorne, where the mountains meet the sea, has been a popular seaside holiday destination for more than a century. Nestled around Loutit Bay, at the mouth of the Erskine River, it has 2 km of sheltered swimming beaches and golden sands. Inland, there are lush rainforests with ferns and waterfalls to discover. It's not surprising that Lorne was the first place to be recognised by the Victorian Government as a place of natural beauty and special significance.

Lorne is now a cosmopolitan resort. There are lots of cafes and restaurants, galleries, bookshops and boutiques to explore. With its mild climate and seaside location, Lorne has a distinctly Mediterranean feel. Yet it is just a two-hour drive from Melbourne.

There is lots to see and do at Lorne. Watch the local fishing fleet land their catch, attempt a range of water sports, enjoy a round of golf or catch a movie at the historic cinema. A short drive to Teddy's Lookout is rewarded with scenic coastal views. The Great Ocean Road hugs the coast from Lorne to Apollo Bay and there are wonderful sea views at every turn of the road. The Cumberland River is a popular camping spot with its tranquil river and craggy cliffs.



▲ *The forest meets the sea*



▲ *Cumberland River Camping Reserve*



▲ *Morning Light*



▲ *Spectacular Coastline*

▶ *Aerial view over Lorne*





At any time of the day, the changing light and colours of Lorne's Loutit Bay is a photographer's delight. Captured here are Lorne Pier at sunrise and a view towards Lorne at dusk. Captain Loutit named the bay after himself when he sheltered here while salvaging cargo from a shipwreck.



The magnificent Erskine Falls is the tallest and most easily accessible waterfall in the Otways. It is a 10 km drive from Lorne or a three-hour walk along the Erskine River. The water drops 30 metres over a cliff into a pool lined with tree ferns. Two viewing platforms give different views of the waterfall.

The Angahook Lorne State Park extends from Aireys Inlet past Lorne to Cape Patton and is well worth a visit. It contains more than 50 km of walking tracks with fern gullies, rainforest, mountain streams and many waterfalls to explore.



▲ Erskine Falls

Rainforest stream in the Angahook Lorne State Park ►



Apollo Bay

This charming village was named by Captain Loutit in 1845 after his ship the Apollo. There are excellent facilities for holiday makers with a variety of places to eat and interesting shops and galleries to browse in. The foreshore features distinctive carved wooden sculptures. Apollo Bay has golden sandy beaches and the golf course has great ocean views. Nearby Marriners Lookout has panoramic views and is also the launching pad for intrepid hang gliders. The Cable Station Historical Museum has shipwreck relics and other historical memorabilia.



▲ Village sculptures



▲ View over the breakwater and harbour

An aerial view highlights Apollo Bay harbour ►





Apollo Bay has a picturesque harbour and an active local fishing fleet specialising in the crayfish and abalone industries. Delicious seafood and freshly cooked crayfish can be bought at the Fisherman's Cooperative and there is an abalone factory. Naturally, seafood features at many of the town's restaurants while fish and chips always taste better eaten by the seaside.



In the 1840s Apollo Bay was a small whaling station. Sawmills were established with early settlement in the 1850s. The timber industry continues to the present. The early timber clearing created a circle of farmland around Apollo Bay. Further inland, however, the rainforests remain and the Otway State Forest incorporates the Otway Ranges between the coast and Colac. To the west, the 12800 hectares of the Otway National Park cover most of the Cape Otway promontory.



▲ Turtons track

Cleared Otway Hills near Apollo Bay ►



Cape Otway Lightstation

Cape Otway Lighthouse, built in 1848 is the oldest surviving lighthouse on the Australian mainland. Twenty metres high and 90 metres above the sea, it is located on the narrow western entrance to the notoriously treacherous Bass Strait where many ships were wrecked before it was built. The station complex includes two houses and other buildings.

There are numerous scenic drives in the vicinity of Cape Otway and the area is dotted with tearooms, gift shops and craft galleries. Other notable sights are Marriners Falls, north of Apollo Bay, which is reached by a 3 km return walk that follows the Barham River and Blanket Bay (shown over) between Apollo Bay and the Cape Otway Lighthouse. Access to this beautiful place can be difficult and it is advisable to seek local advice.



▲ Marriners Falls



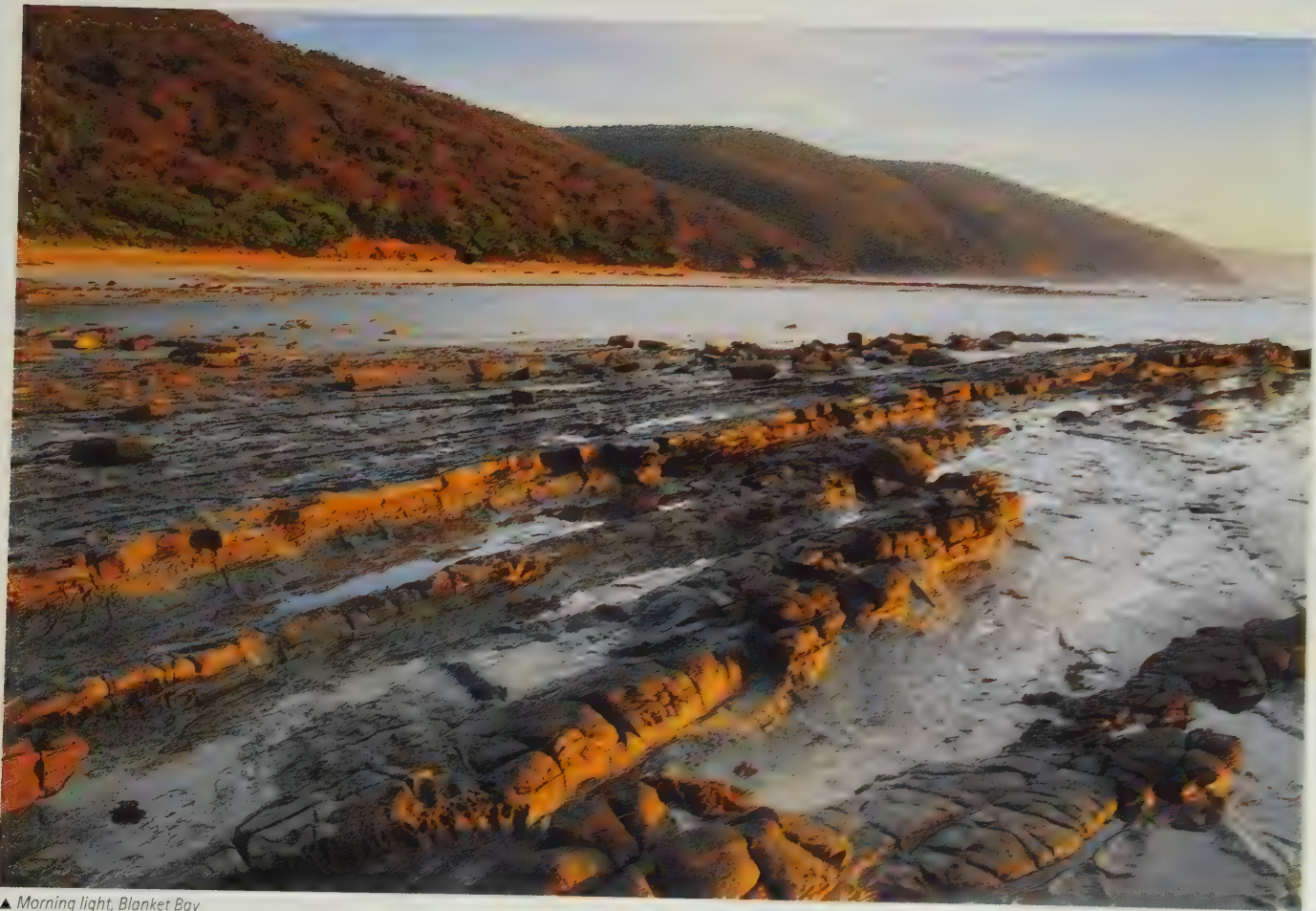
▲ Cape Otway Lightstation, built 1848

Aerial over Cape Otway▶





▲ Sunrise at Blanket Bay

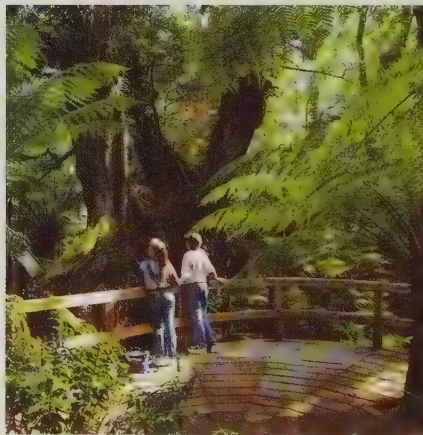


▲ Morning light, Blanket Bay

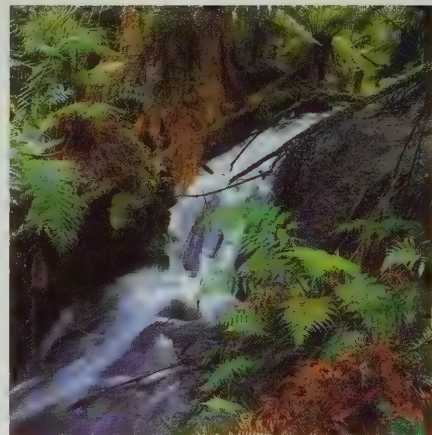
The Otways

Lush rainforest and thundering waterfalls abound in the Otways. The short Maits Rest rainforest walk should not be missed. Boardwalks and interpretive signs add to the enjoyment of this secluded gully. It is not far from Apollo Bay but was kept as a prized secret for many years. Melba Gully State Park near Lavers Hill is a beautiful rainforest known for its glow worms. There are lush fern gullies, towering gum trees and cascading waterfalls. It also contains the Big Tree, a 300-year old Otway messmate with a 27 metre girth.

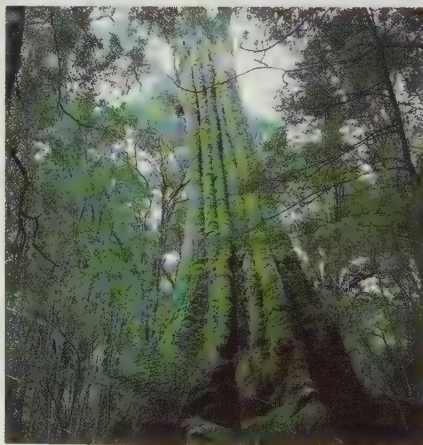
The beautiful Stevensons Falls (far right), near Upper Gellibrand, is typical of the picturesque waterfalls in the area. Between Beech Forest and Lavers Hill there are many waterfalls. Shown on the next pages are Beauchamp Falls, Triplet Falls and Hopetoun Falls, where a viewing platform is just 10 metres from the car park.



▲ Maits Rest



▲ Melba Gully



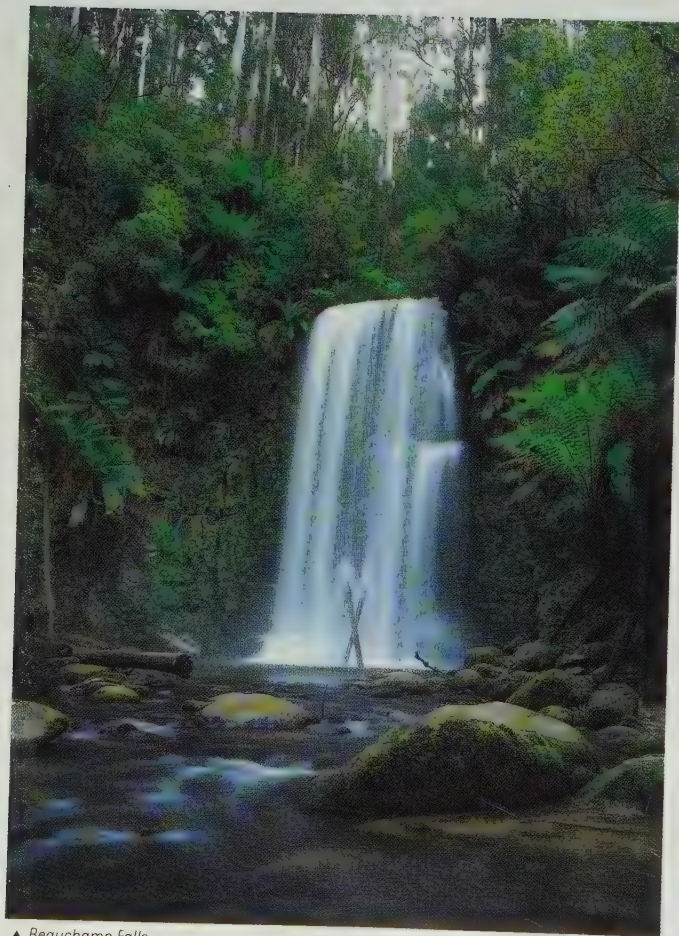
▲ The Big Tree



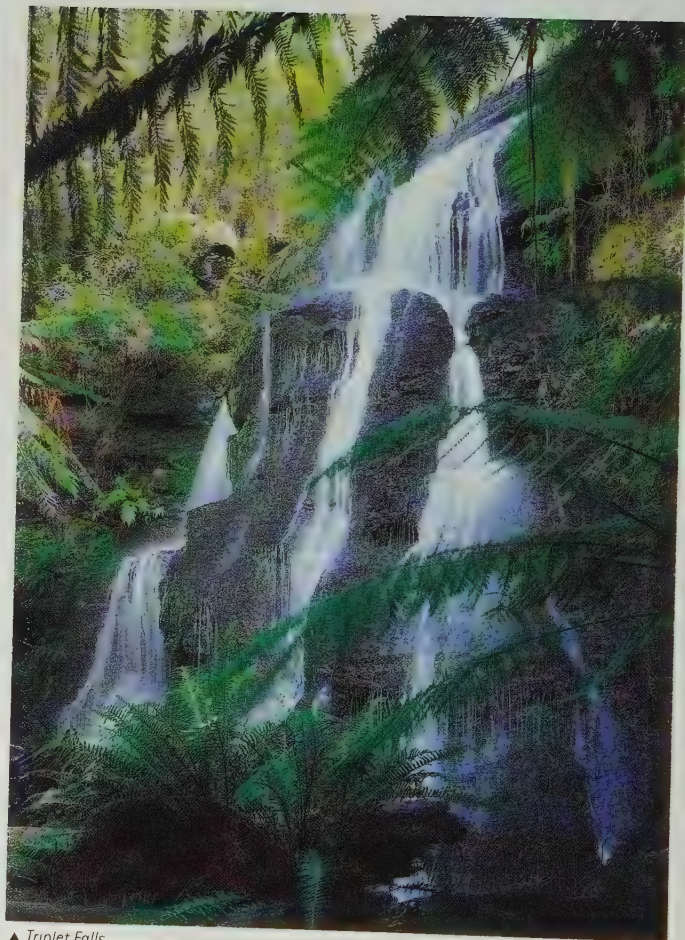
▲ Otway Forest

Stevensons Falls ►





▲ *Beauchamp Falls*



▲ *Triplet Falls*

Hopetoun Falls ►



Otway Fly

Opened in September 2003, this steel walkway is 600 metres long and 25 metres high. It is the longest and highest of its kind in the world and allows visitors an unusual view of the treetops. It is accessible via a gently graded walk through temperate rainforest and towering stands of beech, myrtle, blackwood and mountain ash. The adventurous can ascend a 45 metre lookout via a spiral stairway and enjoy panoramic views above the forest canopy. There is a visitors centre, which provides information on the Fly and the local flora and fauna as well as the opportunity to relax and enjoy gourmet food. The Otway Fly is a 15 minute drive from Lavers Hill or 45 minutes from Apollo Bay.



▲ Rainforest viewing



▲ A walk through the treetops ►



At Wreck Beach the anchors of the Marie Gabrielle, wrecked in 1880, jut through the sand. The anchors of the Fiji, wrecked in 1891, can also be seen at this aptly named beach. They are reminders of the many fatal shipwrecks that occurred around this coast. Nearby, there are spectacular views of Moonlight Head from the Gable Lookout. The hazards of shipping in the early days are easily understood when viewing the ocean pounding this rugged coastline.



▲ Anchors of the "Marie Gabrielle" Wreck Beach, Moonlight Head

The Gables Lookout, Moonlight Beach ►

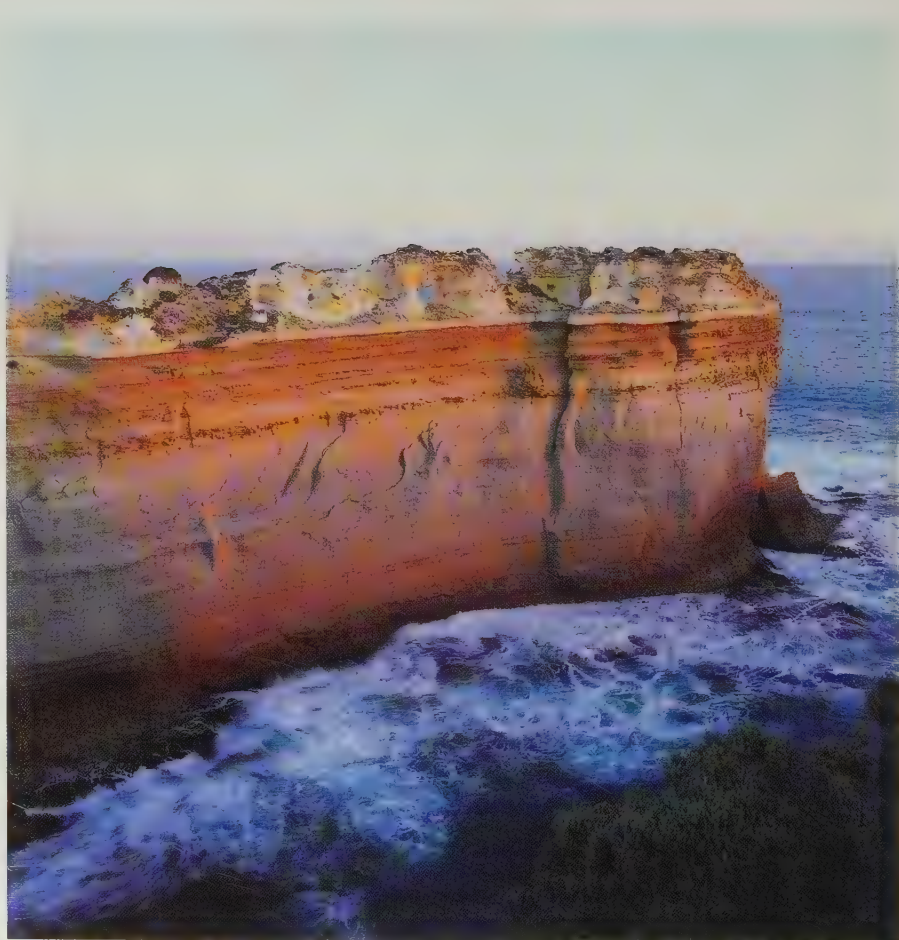


Port Campbell National Park

The coastal strip between Princetown and Peterborough was declared a national park in 1964. This stretch of coast is one of Australia's most famous. Over millions of years, the limestone cliffs have been eroded by the ocean and the wind. This has produced some of nature's most spectacular sights such as Island Arch and the Razorback, near Loch Ard Gorge, but the most famous site is the Twelve Apostles. These amazing rock formations are set against 70 metre cliffs. From sunrise to dusk the changing light enhances the beauty of this awe-inspiring vista. An information centre and viewing platforms enable visitors to enjoy this special place.



▲ *Island Arch*



▲ *The Razorback*

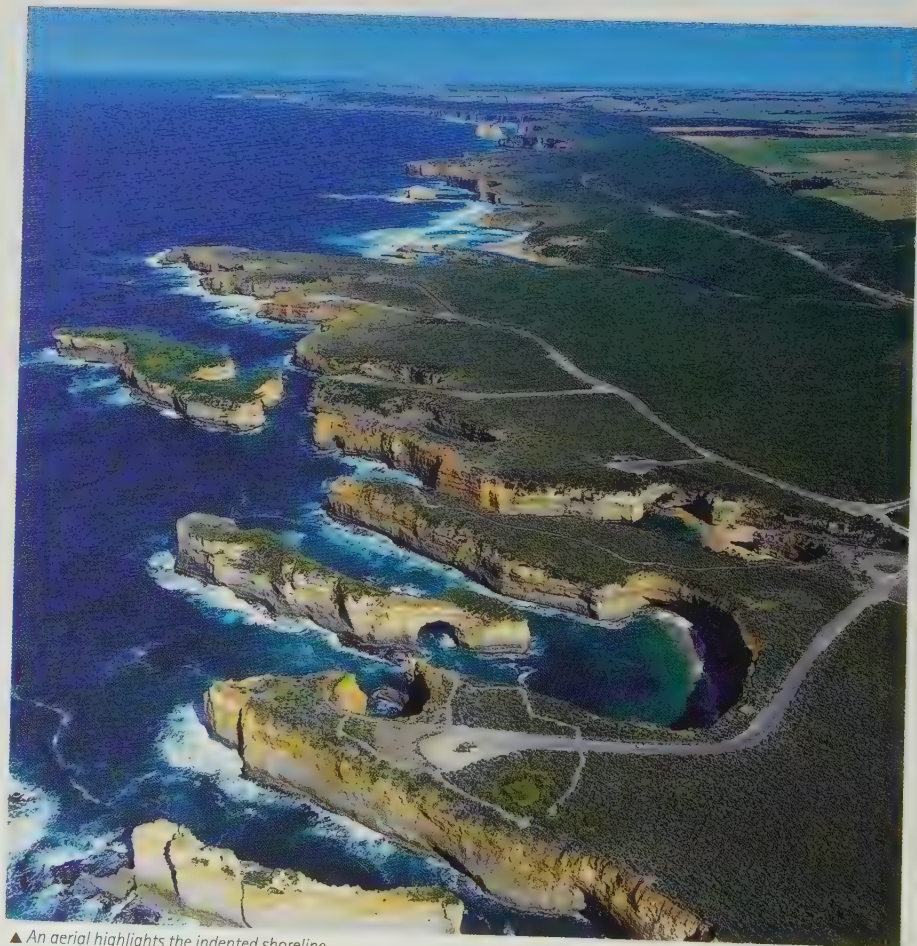
Sunrise at the Twelve Apostles ►



Aerial views of the indented shoreline show the eroded cliffs and gorges. Muttonbird Island and Loch Ard Gorge are shown and the rock formations of the Twelve Apostles. The coast, now a marvellous sight for tourists, was a treacherous place in the days of sail. Along the Shipwreck Coast a series of plaques tell the story of the ships that were wrecked along this dangerous coastline.



▲ An Apostle dwarfs a dive boat



▲ An aerial highlights the indented shoreline

Aerial view over the Twelve Apostles ►





▲ Sunrise at Gibsons Beach



▲ An evening summer sky at the Twelve Apostles (Photo Steve Ryan)

Loch Ard Gorge

This gorge was named after the ill-fated iron clipper *Loch Ard*, which was wrecked on nearby Muttonbird Island. All but two of the 54 passengers and crew perished. Most of the passengers were in the cabin and did not have time to escape before the ship sank. Tom Pearce, a cabin boy, clung to the capsized lifeboat and was eventually swept into the gorge. It had a narrow strip of sand and caves, unlike the other gorges that had sheer cliffs and meant certain death for those unfortunates swept into them. Tom Pearce collapsed on the beach but heard the cries of a young woman clinging to a spar. He plunged back into the sea and eventually managed to get Eva Carmichael ashore. The next day Tom went for help and eventually the two were cared for at Glenample Homestead, which is now open to the public. Eva was the sole survivor of her family and their grave, and that of others whose bodies were recovered, can be seen on the cliff top.



▲ Inside Loch Ard Gorge

Loch Ard Gorge ►



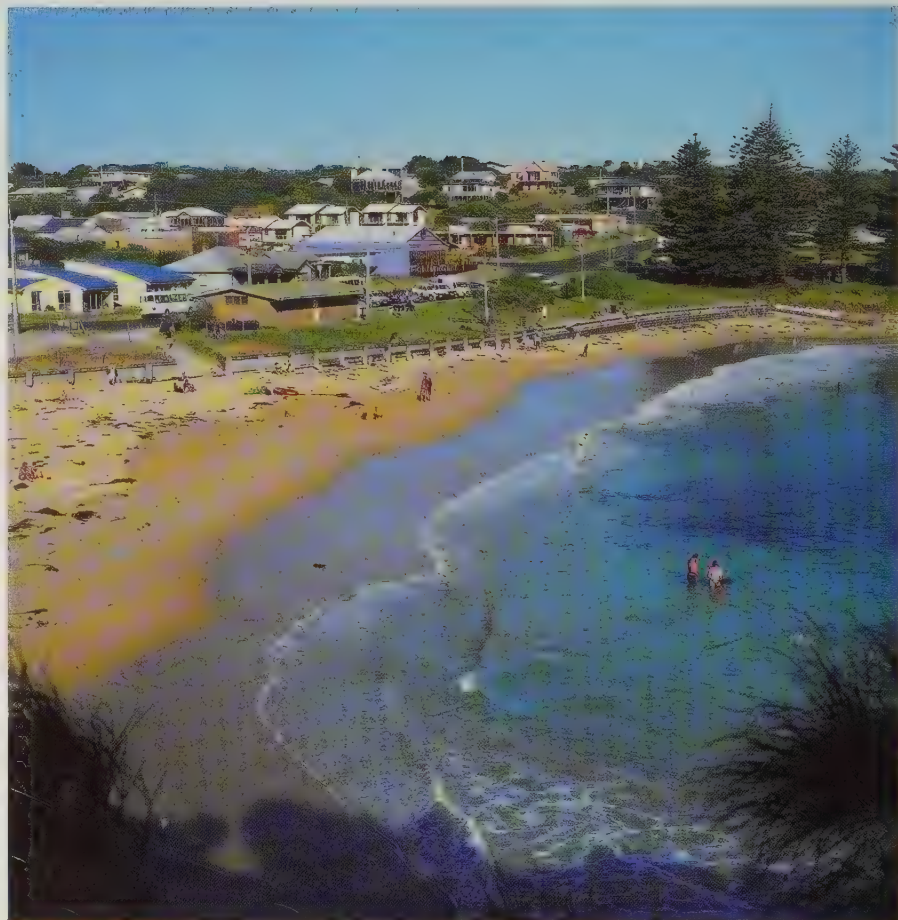
Port Campbell

Port Campbell is nestled around a natural harbour and was a supply port for farmers in the early days of white settlement. The Norfolk pines and cliffs that shelter the town give it a distinctive character. Once a sleepy fishing village, Port Campbell is now a popular seaside holiday destination. There are interesting shops to browse in and a choice of places to eat, some with appealing views of the harbour and the sea. The Museum has relics from the Loch Ard and other maritime artefacts.

Port Campbell is an ideal base for exploring the Shipwreck Coast and the Twelve Apostles. Organised tours for diving, snorkelling or sightseeing are available. For an unforgettable experience try a flight over the Twelve Apostles or cruise around them.



▲ Port Campbell Jetty



▲ Port Campbell Beach

An aerial view over Port Campbell ►







Port Campbell National Park

The Bay of Martyrs, with its scenic rock formations, is where the Falls of Halladale ran aground in 1908. There was no loss of life but the large cargo ship was wrecked. London Bridge dramatically lost its connecting arch on 15th January 1990. The Bay of Islands (p. 51) gives its name to the Coastal Park that stretches for 32 km with eroded cliffs and some of the most significant areas of flora and fauna in south-western Victoria. Numerous walks and lookouts provide memorable views.



▲ The Bay of Martyrs

London Bridge ►





▲ Evening light at London Bridge



▲ *The Bay of Islands*

Warrnambool

Warrnambool is the largest city on the Great Ocean Road and has a wide range of shops and services and a lively cafe-restaurant scene. The art gallery is one of Australia's oldest and the Botanic Gardens were designed by William Guilfoyle who also designed the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. The Fletcher Jones gardens have given pleasure to generations of visitors. There is easy access to Lady Bay and Lake Pertobe, a 35 hectare park with an adventure playground.

To the west is Tower Hill Reserve, the site of an extinct volcano, which erupted 30,000 years ago. (p. 54) The crater is now a lake and the Reserve has abundant wildlife and panoramic views. Proudfoot's Boathouse, on the Hopkins River on the outskirts of Warrnambool, is classified by the National Trust.



▲ The mouth of the Hopkins River



▲ An aerial view over Warrnambool Bay

Lake Pertobe ►





▲ Tower Hill volcanic crater



▲ Hopkins River Boatsheds

Whale Watching

Between June and September Logans Beach at Warrnambool often plays host to migrating Southern Right Whales. These amazing creatures grow up to 17 metres long and can weigh 100 tonnes. They are mammals and breathe air and suckle their young. In summer the sub-Antarctic is their home but in winter they seek the warmer waters of southern Australia. The female whales come close to shore to calve in the shallow waters and frolic with their young. They can be viewed from a specially constructed platform in the sand dunes or from the beach.

Warrnambool's Lady Bay was the site of one of the biggest whaling stations in the 1800s and the Southern Right Whales were easy prey for whalers because they were slow moving, came close to shore and had a high oil and blubber content. By the 1840s they had almost been hunted to extinction; they are still rare with only about 5000 left in the world. Now these gentle creatures are returning to their old haunts to the delight of locals and tourists alike.



▲ Whale watching at Logans Beach

Southern Right Whale (Photo Kelvin Aitken) ►



Flagstaff Hill

The Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum at Warrnambool is a fascinating recreation of a nineteenth century port and harbour village complete with sailmaker's loft, town hall, bank, chapel, shops and cottages.

Built around the original lighthouse and keeper's cottage, the four hectare site allows the visitor to step back in time, walking along cobbled streets and imagining life in the days of sail and steam. After exploring the village, it's time to relax and enjoy a meal or a coffee at the restaurant. It overlooks the village and the tranquil harbour with the ocean in the distance. There is also a well-stocked gift and souvenir shop.

The Loch Ard Peacock is one of the treasures at Flagstaff Hill. This 1.5 metre high Minton porcelain statue was intended to be an exhibit at the 1880 International Exhibition in Melbourne. It was being transported on the ill-fated Loch Ard which was wrecked with the loss of 52 lives. Incredibly, the porcelain peacock, still in its packing case, drifted ashore two days later. The only damage it had suffered was a small chip on its beak. The Loch Ard Peacock is the star of the Great Circle Gallery at Flagstaff Hill.



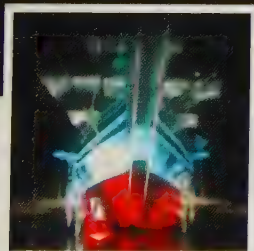
▲ Loch Ard Peacock



▲ Flagstaff Wharf



▲ View over Flagstaff Hill



Flagstaff Hill's sound and laser light show 'Shipwrecked' is a multimedia retelling of the Loch Ard story. Using the harbour village as the background, the story is projected onto a nine metre semi-circular water fountain. The show brings to life the perils faced by those who braved the oceans and sailed to Australia to seek new opportunities in a distant land..

Port Fairy

Port Fairy was named by Captain James Wishart when he anchored his cutter Fairy in the harbour in 1810. Port Fairy was one of Victoria's earliest ports and the second busiest sea port in Victoria in the second half of the nineteenth century. Many Irish immigrants settled in the area and from 1843-1867 the town was known as Belfast.

The historic and quaint town of Port Fairy attracts artists and musicians and there are four music festivals each year. More than fifty buildings are classified by the National Trust. The number of historic buildings, both grand and humble, are evidence of Port Fairy's fascinating history. At Mott's Cottage the timber and stone section dates from the 1830s and there are later additions.

Port Fairy has always been associated with the fishing industry and at Moyne River visitors can watch crayfish, abalone and fish being unloaded. A footbridge gives access to Griffiths Island and its lighthouse. The island also has muttonbird rookeries.



▲ Griffiths Island Lighthouse, built 1859



▲ Restored Cottage



▲ Mott's Cottage

Moyne River ►

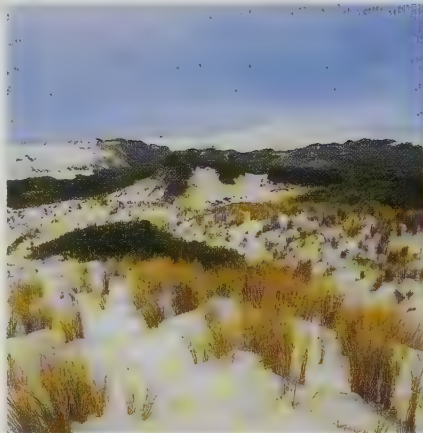


Portland

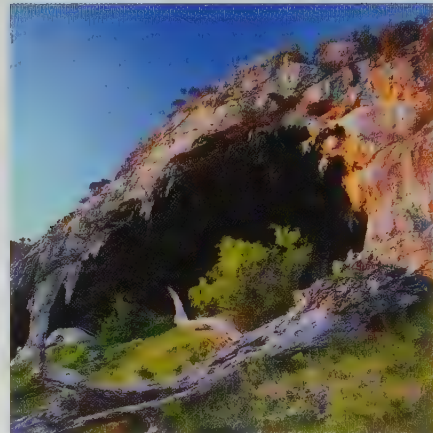
The Hentys were the first white settlers at Portland in 1834. The city today has more than 200 heritage buildings. The Great South West walk is a 250 km trek through rugged and dramatic landscape between Portland and Nelson. This region features sand dunes, limestone caves, lookouts, blowholes, superb beaches, lakes and national parks. There are huge sand dunes at Discovery Bay Coastal Park and the Princess Margaret Rose Cave near Nelson is one of the most beautiful limestone caves in Australia.

Cape Bridgewater was once a volcanic island. The limestone cliffs are 130 metres above sea level, the highest in Victoria. The Cape Bridgewater fur seal colony can be viewed by foot or boat. On the western side of the Cape, 4 km past Bridgewater Beach, is the petrified forest. It is thought it was formed after a forest of Moonah trees was smothered by sand. Water seeping through the sand created a crust on the tree trunks. When they decayed the petrified forest remained.

Cape Nelson is to the east of Bridgewater Bay. The lighthouse was built in 1883 and is 32 metres high.



▲ Sand dunes Discovery Bay Coastal Park



▲ Limestone caves

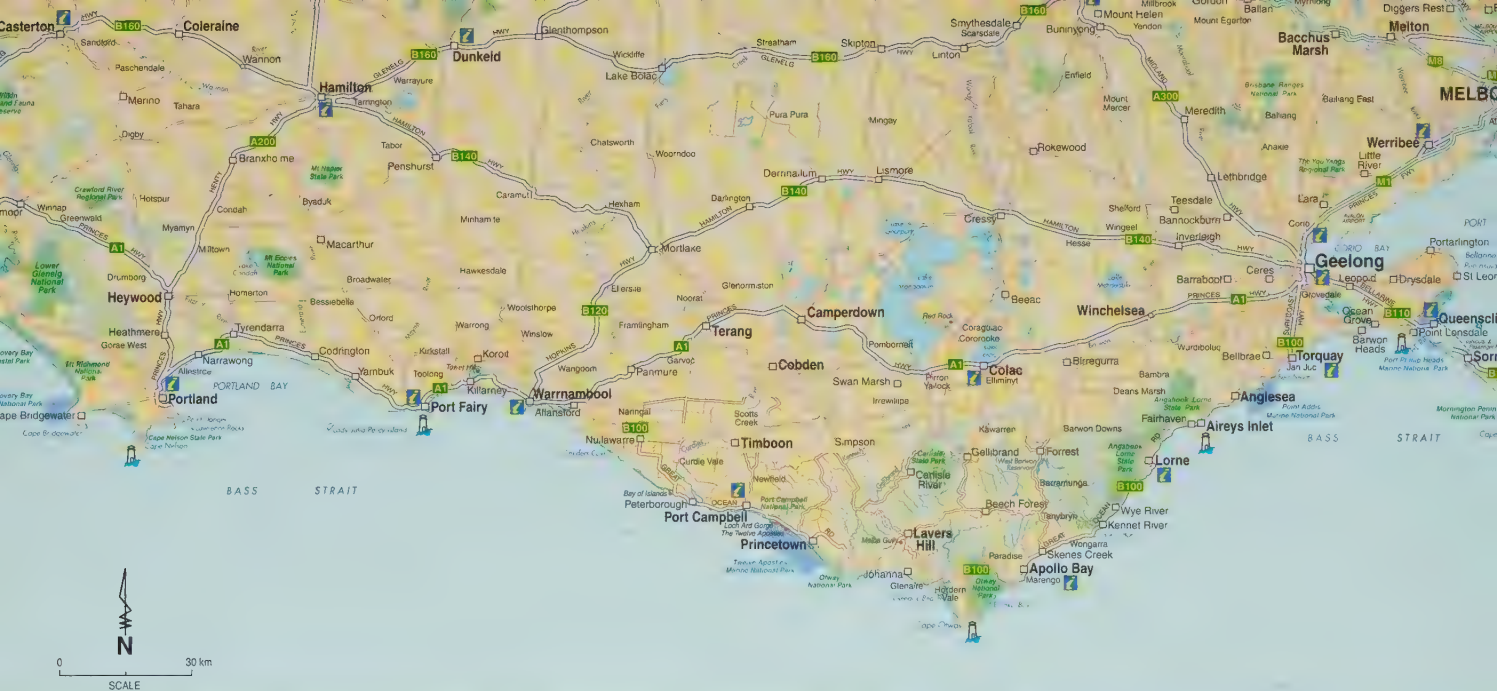


▲ Petrified Forest



▲ Cape Bridgewater
▶ Cape Nelson Lighthouse, built 1883



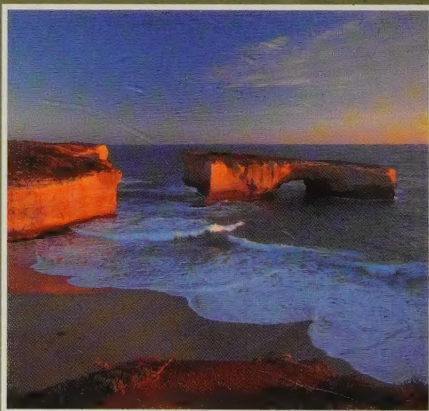


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